

HAMPTON PARKS, RECREATION & LEISURE SERVICES

ADULT SLOW-PITCH SPRING SOFTBALL

2021 RULES AND REGULATIONS

www.hampton.gov/athletics

1. **OFFICIAL RULES:** The 2021 Official Softball Rules published by the National Softball Association (NSA) unless otherwise stated herein by Hampton Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services
2. **TEAM ELIGIBILITY:** A team shall be eligible to participate in the HPRLS softball program upon payment of league fees. Teams will play approximately (+/-) 20 games. A team representative must be present during the preseason managers meeting or the team will be/can be dropped from the league.

The Athletic Division of the HPRLS reserves the right to move a team to a higher league if a team is found "loading" their team up after the original roster has been turned in or the league schedules have been distributed. The Athletic Division has the right to move teams to higher or lower leagues anytime during the season.

3. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:** A team member may participate on one team entered in the HPRLS leagues. If a player is on multiple rosters they will only be a legal player for the first team they played a game with for the season. The only exception to this rule is if a team member wishes to play in the co-ed league. A person is allowed to play on one men's or women's team in addition to playing on one co-ed team. It is the coaches' responsibility to enforce this rule. Anyone found in violation of this rule will be suspended for a minimum of one year and all of the games that he/she participated in for their second team will be forfeited. To participate in the end-of-season tournament, a team member must have played in at least five (5) games during the regular season.

Each player is required to bring their driver's license or picture-ID with him/her to every game, and will be required to present it upon request. If a player fails to produce identification, when asked by the umpire or City Staff, the player's team will forfeit the game immediately. Any team that plays an ineligible player will be charged with forfeiture for all games in which the player has participated. The illegal player will be suspended from all league play for one calendar year from the date of notice for the infraction. The illegal player's team will be deemed ineligible for any post season play that season. Playoff teams found to be using any ineligible player will be removed from the playoffs giving their scheduled opponent a forfeit win.

HPRLS reserves the right to remove a player or team from any league at any time if the player's skill or the team's skill level is far more advanced than the level of competition.

Each participant must be at least 18 years old before 4/1/21 in order to play in an Adult League.

TEAM ROSTERS: The team roster shall not exceed 20 players, unless it is a church team or a co-ed team. Church teams may have an unlimited number of players on their rosters and the co-ed teams are limited to 35 players per roster. Any additional roster limit changes must be approved by HPRLS

4. **ROSTER ADDITIONS:** For a player to become eligible to participate in the HPRLS Softball program after the initial roster has been submitted to the Athletic Office, the team manager must submit an updated or separate roster listing the player that is being added. Each player addition must have signed the roster before he/she is eligible to participate; otherwise the game is forfeited. Updated rosters must be submitted to the Athletic Office by 2:00pm for a player to be eligible to play that night.

Roster additions will not be accepted after May 7, 2021 unless approved by the Athletic Division. Once your original roster is turned in and your team has been placed in their permanent league, no player can be added from a higher league.

Note: Roster deletions will not be taken over the phone. Team managers may email the names to be removed off the roster or can come to the Athletic Office and submit the names. Any player appearing on two or more rosters at the starting date of the regular league season will legally belong to the team for which he/she participated in first in a HPRLS schedule league game.

5. **UNIFORMS:** Each player participating in a league or tournament game must wear a uniform shirt. These shirts must be similar in color with the same team name (if applicable) and have six (6) inch (or greater) numbers on the back. Team names and player numbers must be on the jersey by using any form of permanent marking, i.e. Screen printing, marker, paint, etc. Once a number has been assigned to a player no other player may have that number until that game is over. No taped numbers will be allowed. If one player has a team name on their uniform then all players must have the same team name. Sweat shirts, jackets or other cold weather gear may be worn over the jersey. The player may be required to show that they have on a legal uniform under their cold weather gear. Each player must be assigned individual numbers so that they do not duplicate another teammate's number. **All teams must be in uniform shirts no later than May 7, 2021.** Any player out of uniform taking the field or batting will be removed from the game until it is corrected. A game will only be forfeited for a uniform infraction if the team falls below the minimum number of required players in uniform to play a game. Teams that have two (2) or more sets of uniforms are not exempt from this rule.

EXAMPLE: The Blue Jays have a set of blue jerseys and a set of white jerseys. All players participating in that scheduled game must have either all blue or all white shirts.

This is not an optional rule to the opposing manager, but a rule that will be strictly enforced by umpire.

6. **EQUIPMENT:** By taking the field (no matter if a pre-game conference with the coach/manager was held or not, or if an equipment check was performed or not) the coach and/or team manager automatically verifies that his/her team is legally and properly equipped.
- A. **Game Balls:** Teams will be required to provide their own playable NSA stamped ball. Each optic (yellow) ball provided must be a .52 C.O.R. for men. Women will use an optic (yellow) .52 C.O.R. ball. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 275 pounds. Men will use a 12" ball and women will use an 11" ball. Co-ed will use both the 12" and the 11" balls for male and female players consecutively. Each team is responsible for hitting their own softballs. Teams may decide to use a lesser core ball, but may not exceed the maximum core of the softball. Multi layered balls have been banned. **All balls must have the NSA stamp.**

1. Rule 3 Sec 2: The Official Softball shall be optic yellow in color as approved by NSA. The softball MAY NOT be multi layered. The solid core ball must be stamped with one of the official NSA logos. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or Executive Vice President of the NSA. **(See logos on page 19 of the rule book)**

NEW RULES FOR SOFTBALLS

- 1 Beginning 1 Jan 2018, you will begin seeing softball with different logos on them. Below are descriptions of balls that are approved and Will Be Legal for all NSA play beginning 1 Jan 2018.
- 2 52/275 Softball -11" and 12" **Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch** with **COR** compression stamped on the ball (legal through Dec 2018)
- 3 52 / 275 Softball - stamped Official Softball - 11" and 12" **Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch. No COR** compression stamped on the ball
- 4 44 / 400 Softball - stamped **ICON** 11" and 12" **Slow Pitch No COR** compression stamped on the ball
- 5 44 / 400 Softball stamped Senior 11" and 12" **Slow Pitch COR** / compression stamped on the ball
- 6 47/375 Softball - stamped Fast Pitch 11" and 12" **Fast Pitch** no compression stamped on the ball
- 7 Please note: Although NSA will be going to the 44/400 ball starting 1 Jan 2018, the 52/275 ball will still be legal until further notice.

B. **Game Bats:** The official bat shall bear the NSA 2012 logo and be a bat manufactured by a bat company that is listed on the Official Licensed Bat Company list found at www.playnsa.com. The official bat cannot be a bat listed on the Non-Approved Bat list or Non-Approved Bat Company List.

7. **GAME TIME LIMIT:** A 55-minute time is imposed on each game. All ties will be played out
- A. Once inning is started, the complete inning must be played.
 - B. The next inning starts immediately after the third out of the previous inning.
 - D. The first game of the night will begin at 6:30 p.m. There is no grace period for games.
8. **REGULATION GAME:** A full regulation game will be seven innings or 55 minutes. Five innings or four ½ innings of play will be considered an official game if the home team is ahead. Games stopped before being considered an official game will continue the game from the point the original game was stopped.

Run rules: 15 runs after 3 innings, 12 runs after 4 innings and 10 runs after 5 innings.

All batters will assume a one ball and one strike count when they go up to bat. Batters will be granted one courtesy foul per at bat.

Men's and Women's teams may begin a game with 9 players and the 10th vacant spot in the batting lineup **will not be an out**. Teams may insert the 10th batter into a lineup at anytime during a game. Co-ed teams may begin a game with 8 players; it must be 4 women and 4 men. Co-ed teams must bat even numbers of 8, 10 or 12 players. Any coed team with 10 players in the lineup must play 10 in the field. **All players must be in the field/dugout at the start of the game to meet minimum player requirements.**

Coed Teams: Outfielders may not be on the infield surface. Coed teams must have 2 females and 2 males in the infield and outfield positions when using 10 players not including the pitcher/catcher combination. There cannot be a Rover (male or female). There must be two male and two female outfielders in the outfield at the time the ball is pitched and it is the umpire's discretion to determine if the defensive team is in compliance.

Courtesy Runner: Coed teams may only use one male and one female courtesy runner each inning. A male must run for a male and female for a female. Men's and women's teams may only use one courtesy runner per inning. Any Player in the line-up or on the team's roster may be the courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is on base when it is his or her turn up to bat the player will be skipped and an out will be awarded. Note: a player needing a Courtesy Runner is not restricted to any certain number of times per inning that he/she may have a Courtesy Runner.

Walking a batter in Coed: In Coed games only, if a male batter is walked intentionally or unintentionally the male batter is awarded second base. The female batter will only have the option to hit or take the walk to first base if there are two outs. If there are not two outs the female must bat.

9. **HOME RUN LIMITS:** The following are the home run limits for each division.

Unlimited:	Unlimited	with the One-up
C/CC League:	4	with the One-up
D League:	2	with the One-up
DD League:	1	with the One-up
Co-ed League:	2	with the One-up

League has adopted the "Hit and Sit" rule on home runs. It is the teams' responsibility to make sure that a home run is official before leaving the base path to head to the dugout.

One-up Rule: Once both teams have reached their HR limit; either team may hit an additional HR. No team is ever allowed to go up by more than 1 HR against the opposing team. First home run hit over the limit will be declared an out; any additional home run hit will end the inning.

THE HOME TEAM IS NOT ALLOWED TO GO 1-UP IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 7TH INNING OR IF TIME HAS EXPIRED.

10. **AUTOMATIC SUSPENSIONS:** Any player ejected from a game shall be suspended from the next two (2) games to be played by his/her team. If a player participates in two leagues the ejected player will instead be suspended for four (4) games. Two (2) out of the four (4) games must include the league the player was ejected from resulting in the suspension. Notice of this suspension will not be necessary. No exceptions.
- A SECOND EJECTION NO MATTER WHICH LEAGUE(S) THE EJECTIONS OCCURRED WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON.**
- A. Arguing of balls and strikes will not be allowed.
Penalty: 1. Warning
2. Ejection from the game
 - B. Racial remarks will not warrant a warning.
 - C. **Before a player is reinstated they must make an appointment with the Athletic Division to discuss the matter.** If the suspended player participates in league play before they meet with the Athletic Division, the player in question and coach will be suspended for a period of one year from the date of the infraction.
 - D. **Any player, coach or spectator ejected from a game must leave the park. If the person doesn't leave the park the umpire will forfeit his or her team's current game. The suspended individual will not be permitted back to the park during the time any league games until their suspension is completed.**
 - E. If a player is on a men's or women's team and a co-ed team, the player cannot play for either team while suspended.

Note: The use of such a player shall result in an automatic forfeit by his/her team of all games in which he/she participated while suspended and the team member will be suspended for a period of one year.

11. **LEAGUE SUSPENSION:** For Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Coaches, Players, and Fans: Any act of unsportsmanlike conduct observed by the HPRLS or reported to the HPRLS by its agents, such as umpires, commissioners of officials, school officials, etc., will be investigated by the HPRLS. If a suspension is imposed, it will be for a minimum of one year from the date of the suspension.
- Example: Striking an umpire or player or using racial remarks towards an umpire, player, spectator or teammate could result in suspension from one year to lifetime from all HPRLS sponsored programs.
12. **FORFEITURES:**
- A. Any team that is charged with three (3) forfeitures of any nature, except in the case of an ineligible player, during the regular season shall be removed from any end-of-season tournament play.
 - B. A team will forfeit their current game and two (2) additional games if a player (s) leave their playing positions and/or the dugout area to aggressively confront the opposing team. If a team engages into physical contact with the opposing team they will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
 - C. If the first game of a double header is forfeited for lack of required players at the field the next games will begin 30 minutes from the scheduled start of the first game.
13. **PROTEST:** Protests shall not be allowed or considered if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgment on the part of any umpire. A protest of a game must be made to the umpire immediately before the next pitch is made to the batter. No protest can be made after the last out of the 7th innings or earlier inning if time has expired. In the case of player ineligibility, that questioned team member will be required to present his/her picture-I.D. upon the umpire's request. If that player cannot provide pictured identification, he/she must be removed from the game until correct identification can be provided. Any team that is charged with a forfeiture, shall be charged for all of the games that the ineligible player has participated in. All other protests shall be in writing, stating player or rule in question and be accompanied by a \$100.00 (except in the case of an

illegal player) fee in check or money order payable to the City of Hampton. The fee will be returned and the game will be replayed from the point of the infraction if a protest is upheld. The protest must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. to the Athletic Office on the next city workday immediately following the game, which is protested. If the Athletic Division staff is present at the park during the game when the protest is made, a ruling can be done onsite once the protesting team provides the appropriate fee.

Example: Tuesday's game protest due by 4:00 p.m., Wednesday.
Friday's game protest due by 4:00 p.m., Monday.

GAME CANCELLATIONS: Games cancelled because of rain or wet grounds shall be determined at each field at game time by the official-or earlier-if possible by HPRLS. Call the Recreation Information Hotline at 727-6251 after 5:00 p.m. to determine if games have been cancelled. If cancellations are not on the information line, players are expected to report to the game site.

14. **SCHEDULE CHANGES:** Cancelled games will be re-scheduled by the HPRLS within 48hrs. There may be up to 24-hour advance notice on make-up games, except for end-of-season games and tournament games. Therefore, it is the **coach's responsibility** to gain this information from the Athletic Division and relay the revised schedule to their players. Claiming ignorance of a re-scheduled game time or date, which results in a game forfeiture, shall not be justification for a protest. Make-up games will be played whenever a field is available. This could be during the week, Friday nights or Saturdays. **We cannot give consideration to teams scheduled to play in other leagues or tournaments.**

15. **END-OF-SEASON TOURNAMENT:**
 - A. **The top 4 teams in each division will advance to the end-of-season double elimination tournament.** In the event that team standings are tied, head to head results will be the determining factor. If a tie still exists, runs yielded between the tied teams' games against each other, then runs yielded for the entire year, followed by total runs scored for the year will be the determining factors.
 - B. For the end-of-season tournament each team must have nine (9) players to start and finish a game. Co-ed must have eight (8) players; four men and four women.
 - C. Championship Winner & Runner-up will receive awards
 - D. There will be no time limit for championship games.
 - E. The home team will be decided by higher seed.
 - F. **TOURNAMENT GAMES CAN BE PLAYED ANY NIGHT OF THE WEEK.**

16. **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES:** The use of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances on City property is prohibited. Anyone caught using them shall be subject to arrest. Any players caught using illegal substances or consuming alcoholic beverages will be suspended from the league indefinitely. A team may be censored if their supporters (fans) are caught indulging in the use of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances.

17. **ABUSE OF PROPERTY:** Any team, team member or anyone connected with a team in any way, found guilty of defacing or damaging property at any of the game sites will be banned permanently from participation in all HPRLS sponsored programs.

Example: Banging on dugout roofs, dugouts, fences, or tampering with lights or light box switches, etc.

18. **SAFETY RULES:**
 - A. Only bats may be used to loosen up. Nothing may be attached to a bat such as a donut.
 - B. A shoe shall be considered legal if it is made with either leather or canvas uppers or similar materials. The soles may have soft or hard rubber cleats. **Metal cleats are prohibited.** Shoe sole or heel projections other than the standard shoe plate are prohibited. The all-purpose molded cleat softball shoe is legal. Shoes must be worn by all players.

- C. Cars are not allowed to park or pull on any grass areas on any softball fields in the City of Hampton. Any player or fan illegally parked will be ticketed and towed at the owner's expense. Cars parked in illegal parking spaces will also be towed.
 - D. Players, coaches, or team managers will not be allowed to stand inside the playing area during games. Only the on deck player and base coaches will be allowed in the playing area. All other players, coaches, team managers, etc. must be in the dugout or behind the fenced area outside of the playing field. If the offensive team has members standing on the playing field that should be in the dugout, the batter will receive a strike against them. If the defensive team has member standing on the playing field that should be in the dugout, the batter will receive a ball awarded to them.
 - E. NSA and the City of Hampton strongly recommend that all players remove their jewelry prior to game time. There is no jewelry rule, but players play at their own risk. The City of Hampton will not be liable for any damages caused because of players wearing jewelry.
19. All playing rules are specifically covered in the NSA Rulebook.
20. **REFUNDS:** There will be **NO REFUNDS** of any kind after the game schedules have been completed.
21. **PARKING:** There will be absolutely **NO** parking on grass areas on or near athletic fields. If cars are found parked on grass areas at any field, the game will be stopped and cars removed on your time. The game clock will continue to run while cars are being moved. Failure to remove cars will result in forfeiture of the game.
22. **LIABILITY:** The City of Hampton will not be responsible for any injuries incurred to managers, coaches, players, officials or spectators during practice sessions, league play or tournament play.
NOTE: Each roster includes this liability waiver and must be signed for a player to be eligible to play.
23. **CONCESSIONS:** In accordance with the City Code Sec. 26-30, no one shall sell any item(s) at any field(s) unless permission has been granted by the HPRLS. Anyone wishing to operate a concession stand must submit a written request to Hampton Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services Department, 22 Lincoln Street, Hampton, VA 23669.
Note: Anyone caught operating as a concessionaire illegally will be subject to arrest.
24. Hampton Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services reserves the right to change or amend any of the above rules at any time.

ATHLETIC HOTLINE
727-6251

ATHLETICS OFFICE
726-8750